



City of New Bedford
Scott W. Lang, Mayor

City of New Bedford
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Date: June 28, 2007
For Immediate Release

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Mayor Takes Steps to Streamline New Bedford's Permitting Process

New Bedford, Massachusetts- Mayor Scott W. Lang announced today a two-stage initiative to streamline the City permitting process to make it understandable and accessible for citizens as well as to facilitate business expansion and recruitment. Mayor Lang is working with the New Bedford Economic Development Council and numerous city departments on this streamlining project.

"This will allow us to simplify a sometimes cumbersome process that everyone from the average citizen to the major developer must adhere to in order to build or relocate. A streamlined process will save time and energy and money for individuals involved in the development process. It will encourage business development and attract potential investors to New Bedford's economy," said Mayor Lang.

First, Mayor Scott W. Lang has assembled a "Permitting Task Force" comprised of a representative from each city department and board or commission that is regularly involved in New Bedford's permit approval process. These include: City Planning, Inspectional Services, Public Infrastructure, Fire Department, Health Department, Office of the City Solicitor, Office of Community Development and the Economic Development Council. The task force will work to determine ways of improving the city's permitting process, examining other municipalities to learn of best practices.

Secondly, the Mayor has created "First Stop," a one-stop weekly public meeting at which citizens interested in seeking a permit will receive general guidance from each department. A simple comprehensive meeting at the beginning of the permitting process will help alleviate some of the common misunderstandings that can occur with any permitting process.

At the weekly "First Stop" meetings, each citizen seeking a permit will have 20 minutes to present their project and ask questions of the various city department representatives regarding the permitting process.

The weekly meetings will commence on Friday, July 20, 2007. Anyone interested in attending a First Stop meeting must call the City of New Bedford Planning Department at (508) 979-1488 to schedule a time to present his or her project and ask questions of the Permitting Task Force.

“I am enthusiastic about these improvements,” said Mayor Scott W. Lang. “Anything that makes city government more accessible and transparent to the public is a move in the right direction.”

“Governor Deval Patrick supports and applauds Mayor Lang’s efforts to streamline the local permitting process in New Bedford,” said Greg Bialecki, who was appointed the Commonwealth’s first State Permit Ombudsman by Governor Patrick in January of this year. “We look forward to working closely with the city to make permitting more timely, more understandable and more coordinated for new and expanding businesses in New Bedford.”

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